

Press Release – TALENTED WINNERS IN THE “SPOTLIGHT”
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ACT I—YOUNGER STUDENTS

CATEGORY 1 --

- 1st - Taylor Hernandez - piano
- 2nd - Chaasad (Saudi) Fearing - vocal
- 3rd - Bernadette Richter - dance
- 4th - Allison Crump - acrobatics

CATEGORY 2 --

- 1st - Julianna Mazza - lyrical/acrobatics
- 2nd - Maria Hernandez - piano
- 3rd - Emma Lawrence - vocal

CATEGORY 3 -

- 1st - Shalyah Fearing - vocal
- 2nd - Rose Marie Phelps - vocal
- 3rd - Victoria Neukom - acrobatics
- 4th - Timothy Nguyen - piano

GROUPS -

- 1st - Showbiz - musical theater
- 2nd - Flowers Ferguson - vocal
- 3rd - Em and M - vocal

ACT II – OLDER STUDENTS

CATEGORY 1 -

- 1st - Mary Olive Gauthier - vocal
- 2nd - Claire Alexander - violin
- 3rd - Clare Hernandez - piano
- 4th - David Singh - piano

CATEGORY 2 -

- 1st - Kevin Hernandez - guitar
- 2nd - Luke Benedict - original piano
- 3rd - Kailey Holyoke - vocal

CATEGORY 3 -

- 1st - Katie Ruffell - pointe dance
- 2nd - Riley Reardon - dance
- 3rd - Joseph McGill - Highland bagpipe
- 4th - Ashlyn Bigley - vocal

GROUPS -

- 1st - Rhythm and Sole Tap Ensemble - dance
- 2nd - Star Company - dance

PASCO HERITAGE SCHOLARSHIP

Shelby Martin

Above are the winners named at the 30th annual “Spotlight on Talent” Performing Arts Competition, held last Saturday (March 16) at the Center for the Arts at Wesley Chapel High. This contest has become so popular that we now have 2 final shows. Act I (younger students) was at 12 noon, and Act II (older students) was at 7:00 p.m. Each of these outstanding talented young people very much deserves recognition in our area newspapers! A special feature article we definitely feel is called for. Please go to our web site at www.heritagearts.org, to pull up some excellent digital photos.

Here are some additional facts we’d like you to use. 131 contestants were given the opportunity to perform onstage at this first rate facility in front of 2 huge and enthusiastic crowds and 2 panels of professional judges. The non-profit Heritage Arts Center Assoc. is the organization that produces this show each year. A 15 member Board of Dir. worked for 3 months, and the final production team included 20 additional community friends who gave of their time. Exec. Producer was Barbara Friedman, and Asst. Producers were Dr. Rebecca Groomes and Alicia Polk Guanio. 37 different corporate/community sponsors generously donated toward the over \$4,000 cash prizes, trophies and ribbons that were distributed, and to cover the over \$13,000 cost of the shows. The final judges, all professionals in their fields, were Rosemary Bramuchi, Dr. Sang Hie Lee, Carole McBride, Tony Mercer, Jennifer Regal, Dr. Larry Sledge, Rita Van Dyke, Gretchen Warren, and Robert Winslow. Our 2 Masters of Ceremonies were Chip Wichmanowski and Allen Altman. Please put in as much as you can, and please call me if you need any other information. These were spectacular shows, and two huge crowds of hundreds each had a great time cheering these amazing talents. A wonderful variety of many types of talent was presented, with vocal, piano, dance, acrobatics, Scottish bagpipe, violin and guitar performances represented.

One exciting announcement was the climax of the evening show, the naming of our 1st Pasco Heritage Scholarship recipient! The \$1,000 award went to Shelby Martin, a longtime Spotlight participant, who was the graduating senior Pasco County resident with the highest solo scores from our judges.

It was a very full day, showcasing the amazing talents of 131 young people. But hard work, discipline, great instruction and sacrificial parenting paid off with a demonstration of the wonderful and inspiring gifts that the performing and visual arts can be to our lives. The huge audiences of family and community friends who were fortunate enough – and wise enough - to have attended were completely entertained and charmed.